UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/22899
6 August 1991
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 6 AUGUST 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a letter dated 6 August 1991 from Mr. Wissam Az-Zahawi, Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, addressed to Mr. Rolf Ekéus, Executive Chairman of the Special Commission, on the subject of reconnaissance aircraft in reply to Mr. Ekéus' letter of 1 August 1991.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the text of this letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdul Amir AL-ANBARI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex.

Letter dated 6 August 1991 from the Adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission

With reference to your letter of 1 August 1991, I have the honour to inform you that American aircraft have for months been overflying Iraq for purposes of reconnaissance and have photographed virtually every inch of Iraqi territory. We do not believe that the aircraft which the Special Commission intends to use forcibly under the auspices of the United Nations would fly at a higher altitude than the artificial satellites which keep Iraqi territory under constant surveillance.

There is another matter which gives rise to questions in this connection. Why choose an American aircraft piloted by an American pilot when everyone knows that the United States Government's position is openly hostile to the Government of Iraq? Was it not possible to choose an aircraft and pilots from other countries, such as the Soviet Union, France or India, or from all those countries taken together, in order to ensure that the proposed mission could not serve aims other than those of the United Nations?

In so far as the proposed mission involves the United Nations, we would like a request to proceed with the mission to be submitted formally in writing by the Secretary-General of the United Nations or by the President of the Security Council.

In any event, while this is a matter involving the United Nations and although we are convinced of the correctness of our position as set out above and the sound basis of the questions we have posed, and in order to defeat those who harbour evil intentions, we will not place any obstacle in the way of the proposed reconnaissance flights. In this connection, I must point out that you have not specified the period during which the proposed reconnaissance flights will be carried out. To our way of thinking, this point needs to be spelled out in order to make matters perfectly clear.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Wissam AZ-ZAHAWI
Adviser to the Minister for
Foreign Affairs

H.E. Rolf EKEUS
Executive Chairman of the Special Commission
New York